1. (Original) A method of searching images for data contained within said images, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of training images;

extracting image attributes from said training images;

classifying training images according to said extracted attributes;

selecting a particular classifier for each group of training images;

collecting a plurality of images available from remotely connected computers;

indexing said collected images; and

providing an index of said collected images for interrogation by users.

2. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the step of extracting attributes comprises identifying image features characteristic of a particular numerically generated image type.

3. (Original) A method as in claim 2 wherein the training images include groups of one or more of charts selected from a plurality of known charts consisting of column charts, bar charts, line charts, pie charts, scatter charts, area charts, surface charts, and three-dimensional charts.

4. (Original) A method as in claim 3 wherein the step of extracting attributes identifies image features and assigns any identified image features as attributes, said image features including horizontal lines, vertical lines, percentage of white area, circular arcs and text.

5. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the step of classifying images comprises providing image attributes for each image to a plurality of classifiers, said plurality of classifiers being selected from the group consisting of classification trees, discriminant functions, regression trees, support vector machines, neural nets and hidden Markov models.

6. (Original) A method as in claim 5 wherein one of said classifiers is selected for each chart type.

7. (Original) A method as in claim 5 wherein said collected images are indexed in the indexing step by extracting attributes and providing extracted attributes to said classifiers, said classifiers identifying an image type, said images being indexed according to said attributes and said image type.

8. (Original) A method of extracting data from images located on remotely connected machines, said images having been indexed according to claim 7, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving a query from a user;

identifying indexed images responsive to said query; and

presenting identified images to said user in response to said query.

9. (Original) A method as in claim 8 wherein prior to presenting identified images to the user, chart data is extracted from the images and the extracted chart data is presented to the user, the user being allowed to select images for viewing.

10. (Original) A method as in claim 9 further comprising the steps of:

providing additional data as supplemental data to said extracted chart data; and

generating a chart representative of supplemented data, said generated chart being provided responsive to said query.

11. (Original) A search engine for searching images located on remotely connected machines and extracting data from said images, said search engine comprising:

means for receiving a query from a user;

means for identifying images responsive to said query; and

means for presenting identified images to said user in response to said query.

12. (Original) A search engine as in claim 11 wherein the means for identifying images comprises a plurality of classifiers, said plurality of classifiers being selected as optimally identifying a particular image type and selected classifiers being selected from the group consisting of classification trees, discriminant functions, regression trees, support vector machines, neural nets and hidden Markov models.

13. (Original) A search engine as in claim 12 further comprising data extraction means for extracting chart data from images, the extracted chart data being presented to the user for selecting images for viewing.

14. (Original) A search engine as in claim 13 further comprising:

means for supplementing said extracted chart data with supplemental data; and

chart generation means for generating a chart representative of supplemented chart data, said generated chart being provided responsive to said query.

15. (Original) A search engine as in claim 14 wherein the image types include column charts, bar charts, line charts, pie charts, scatter charts, area charts, surface charts, and three-dimensional charts.

16. (Original) A search engine as in claim 15 wherein image features including horizontal lines, vertical lines, percentage of white area, circular arcs and text.

17. (Original) A search engine as in claim 16 further including an image identification trainer comprising:

means for providing a plurality of pre-classified training images;

means for classifying training images according to extracted image features;

means for selecting a particular one of said plurality of classifiers as being an optimum for classifier for a corresponding group of training images;

means for collecting a plurality of images available from remotely connected computers;

means for indexing said collected images;

means for storing an index of indexed said collected images; and

means for providing said index for interrogation by users.

18. (Original) A computer program product fixed in a computer useable medium for searching images located on remotely connected machines and extracting data from said images, said computer program product comprising:

computer code means for receiving a query from a user;

computer code means for identifying images responsive to said query; and

computer code means for presenting identified images to said user in response to said query.

19. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 18 wherein the computer code means for identifying images comprises a plurality of classifiers.

20. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 19 wherein the plurality of classifiers comprises classification trees, discriminant functions, regression trees, support vector machines, neural nets and hidden Markov models.

21. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 20 further comprising computer code means for extracting chart data from images, the extracted chart data being presented to the user for selecting images for viewing.

22. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 21 further comprising:

computer code means for supplementing said extracted chart data with supplemental data; and

computer code means for generating a chart representative of supplemented chart data, said generated chart being provided responsive to said query.

23. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 22 wherein the image types include column charts, bar charts, line charts, pie charts, scatter charts, area charts, surface charts, and three-dimensional charts.

24. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 23 wherein image features include horizontal lines, vertical lines, percentage of white area, circular arcs and text.

25. (Original) A computer program product as in claim 24 further including an image identification trainer comprising:

computer code means for providing a plurality of pre-classified training images;

computer code means for classifying training images according to extracted image features;

computer code means for selecting a particular one of said plurality of classifiers as being an optimum classifier for a corresponding group of training images;

computer code means for collecting a plurality of images available from remotely connected computers;

computer code means for indexing said collected images; and

computer code means for providing an index of said collected images for interrogation by users.